

REMARKS

Applicant acknowledges the Examiner's careful review of this application. Applicant does, however, respectfully request reconsideration and allowance.

Support for the Claim Amendment

The Amendment does not raise a new issue, does not present new matter, and is intended to respond fully and satisfactorily to the Office Action. Applicant therefore earnestly but respectfully, requests the Examiner to enter this Amendment.

It is respectfully submitted that the resin layer (A) is described in the amended claims 1 and 18 consistent with the original specification at, for instance, page 13, lines 10-16.

It is thought that the insoluble methyl-methacrylate particles are described in the amended claims 1 and 18 consistent with Applicants' original specification at, for example, page 9, lines 8-12, page 10, lines 1-8, page 11, lines 3-8 and from page 16, line 22 to page 17.

Applicant has deleted the expression "have a uniform composition" from the recitation describing the insoluble methyl methacrylate particles. Such deletion is without prejudice.

Applicant has deleted the expression "resin layer (A) has no insoluble methyl methacrylate particles." Such deletion is without prejudice.

Interview Summary

Applicant's legal representative acknowledges the Examiner's courtesy and the constructive dialog during a telephone interview conducted on or about May 5, 2004.

Applicant's legal representative and the Examiner discussed alternative language to the expressions now deleted without prejudice from claims 1 and 18. As to the resin

layer (A), transition language was discussed. Applicant suggested "consisting essentially" as an acceptable transition so as to avoid an amount of insoluble methyl methacrylate particle(s) that would materially adversely affect the properties of resin layer (A). As to the resin layer (B), it is now described in the claims consistent with the methods described in the specification. This was discussed with the Examiner and page 9, lines 8-12 and page 16, line 22 to page 17, line 17 were brought out in the discussion.

The possibility of a Declaration being submitted to support the alternative language for resin layers (A) and (B) was also discussed.

Applicant again wishes to acknowledge the Examiner's constructive approach and his consideration of the alternatives summarized above.

Declaration

Applicant respectfully submits a Rule 132 Declaration as a follow-up to the interview. Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to enter the Rule 132 Declaration.

Prior Art Rejections

Applicant acknowledges with appreciation that the prior art rejections have been withdrawn.

Claim Rejection - 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 1, 2, 5, 8-12 and 15-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as allegedly failing to comply with the written description requirement. This rejection is understood to be based on the Examiner's two-fold position that the original disclosure contains neither explicit nor implicit support for the limitations:

"the resin layer (A) has no insoluble methyl methacrylate particles"; and
"the insoluble methyl methacrylate particles have a uniform composition."

Independent claims 1 and 18 have been amended to recite alternative language to describe resin layer (A) as basically avoiding insoluble methyl methacrylate particles that would adversely affect the layer, and to describe resin layer (B) as basically avoiding core-shell structured particles.

As to resin layer (A), the expression "consisting essentially of" is adapted to avoid the presence of insoluble methyl methacrylate particles that would lead to undesired results. The Examiner is respectfully requested to consider Comparative Example 4 because it would appear to show some undesired results associated with the presence of insoluble methyl methacrylate particles. For instance, it appears that the sheet in Comparative Example 4 having such particles has a larger bias of thickness compared to a sheet of an intermediate resin layer (A) that avoids such component and resin layers (B) in Examples 1-4.

As to resin layer (B), the attached Declaration from Applicant relates the amended claim language for such resin layer(s) to the specification at page 9, lines 8-12; page 10, lines 1-8; page 11, lines 3-8; and page 16, line 22 to page 17, line 17. The Declaration is thought to be responsive to the Examiner's suggestion made during the interview on or about May 5, 2004.

Conclusion

Applicant has endeavored to respond to the Office Action in a manner consistent with the constructive, helpful discussion had with the Examiner.

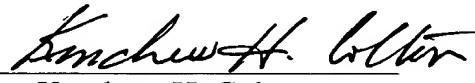
If the Examiner has any questions, or has suggestions towards advancing prosecution, please contact the undersigned.

Appl. No. 09/161,283
Amdt. dated August 6, 2004
Reply to Office Action of April 5, 2004

Applicant earnestly, but most respectfully, solicits favorable consideration of this Amendment followed by a Notice of Allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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